

Administrative Professional Today Newsletter

Issue: June 2025

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How will you respond to adversity?

By [Carole Spiers](#)

"Life isn't a straight line. Everyone faces setbacks and disappointments at some point. The trick is learning how to bounce back and maybe even come out ahead." My mother said this to me years ago, and I've returned to that wisdom time and again. She was right.

Challenges are inevitable. Life has a way of surprising us with events that disrupt our plans—missed promotions, unexpected job losses, health issues or personal disappointments. Some setbacks are minor detours; others feel like roadblocks. But how we respond makes all the difference.

Accept what you can't control

The first step is to acknowledge that some things in life are outside your control. No matter how well you plan, there will always be variables: people, timing, market conditions or even sheer luck that you can't influence. Accepting this reality is not about giving up; it's about preserving your energy for what *can* be changed.

Instead of focusing on what went wrong or what's out of reach, shift your attention to what you *can* do. Adjust your approach. Explore new routes. Be open to changing your strategy if it brings you closer to your goals.

When the road gets rough

Tough times test us. They reveal character and shape growth. Each time you overcome a challenge, you build emotional muscle. The next time adversity shows up, you'll be more prepared, more focused and more capable of navigating through it.

But many people stop at the first sign of failure. One missed opportunity or rejection becomes an excuse to quit trying. So ask yourself: What keeps you moving forward when things don't go as planned? Do you rely on inner strength, or do you wait for someone else to fix it?

Resilience isn't something you're born with—it's something you build. And building it starts with your mindset.

5 strategies to strengthen resilience

1. Take a step back and reflect. It's easy to feel crushed by disappointment. But give yourself a moment to breathe and reflect. Maybe the promotion didn't come through. Take stock of the situation: What did you learn? What skills did you gain? What would you do differently next time?

2. Talk it out. Find someone you trust and who listens without judgment. Sharing your feelings helps lighten the emotional load. Be honest about your disappointment, but also be open to feedback and support. Processing your experience verbally can bring clarity and often uncovers solutions you hadn't considered.

3. Stay positive—even when it's tough. This doesn't mean ignoring how you feel. But try to see the growth opportunity. If you didn't land the contract, think about what went well in your pitch. What insights did you gain from preparing it? Small wins often lead to bigger ones when we keep moving forward.

4. Find the silver lining. Sometimes a setback opens the door to improvement. Maybe this is the push you needed to rethink a process, suggest a new idea or step into a new role. Look for one positive outcome, even if it's just personal growth or greater clarity on your goals.

5. Conduct a self-check. Are you setting realistic expectations? Are your priorities in alignment with your values? The more you understand your motivations, the easier it is to stay grounded during times of uncertainty.

The resilient mindset

Resilient people don't avoid adversity, they adapt to it. They know that tough times are temporary and view setbacks as part of life's learning curve. At the core of resilience is self-belief: the conviction that no matter what happens, you will figure it out.

So how will you respond to adversity? Will you stiffen and risk breaking, or bend with the wind and grow stronger in the process?

Your answer could define your next chapter.

1-Minute Strategies: June '25

Elevate your productivity. Let's face it, between shifting work models and competing priorities, time can feel like it's slipping through your fingers. But instead of blaming the calendar, what if you reframed how you think about time altogether?

Make time a core value

You can't manage productivity without managing time. Yet most of us treat time like an unlimited resource—until we suddenly run out of it. In 2012, I made a mindset shift: I started treating time as one of my core values. That meant choosing how and where I spent it with as much care as how I managed my money.

Ask yourself:

- Who are you spending time with?
- What are you spending time on?
- Is it aligned with your goals?

Every decision—what you say yes to, what you delay, what you ignore—builds the life you're living now.

Start with a mini-time audit

To make a change, you need a baseline. Spend one week tracking how you actually use your time—work, breaks, admin, scrolling, eating, resting. Don't judge it, just observe. At the end of the week, you'll have a powerful picture of where your time is going, and where it might be slipping away.

Align productivity with well-being

True productivity doesn't mean cramming more into your day, it means doing more of what matters without compromising your health. That's what I call productive well-being: output + well-being = sustainable performance.

Instead of burning out, ask:

- What tasks drain you?
- What boosts your energy?
- Are your work habits helping or hurting?

Identify your focus zones

You don't have to work 9–5 to be productive. You just need to know when and how you work best.

Ask yourself:

- When do you naturally focus best—morning, midday, evening?
- Which days of the week do you feel most “on”?
- What environment helps you thrive—quiet, collaborative, remote?

Build your calendar around these insights. Even small adjustments like doing high-focus tasks during your peak hours can dramatically boost your output.

One action today

Grab a notebook. Spend five minutes writing down what you want in your life or career—uncensored. Then ask: What one thing could I do today to move closer to that vision?

When you change how you value your time, you change what's possible.

Credibility and the role of the virtual assistant

By [Gemma Walton](#)

In recent years, the number of administrative professionals turning to self-employment and launching virtual assistant (VA) businesses has grown significantly. Yet, despite the rising demand for flexible support and remote admin expertise, many VAs still face credibility challenges.

Too often, VA work is dismissed as a “side hustle” or something to fit in “around the kids.” Clients sometimes frame the role as a casual helping hand, not as the professional business support it truly is. There's also the issue of new VAs undercharging—sometimes below minimum wage—to win work, or the portrayal of VA life as a quick route to easy money on social media. These perceptions make it harder for skilled professionals to be taken seriously, attract quality clients and charge premium rates.

So how do we shift that narrative? How do we ensure the VA industry is seen as the high-value, professional sector it is?

Here are three simple but powerful ways to build credibility in your VA business and attract clients who respect and value what you do.

1. Use a domain-specific email address

First impressions matter. If your business email is still Gmail or Hotmail, it might be time for an upgrade. While it may sound trivial, using a personal email address can signal that you're not fully invested in your business, or that you're just starting out.

A domain-specific email (e.g., [yourname@yourbusiness.com](#)) instantly makes you look more professional and trustworthy. It shows potential clients that you're serious, organized and credible. Setting one up is quick, affordable and absolutely worth the effort.

2. Build a professional website

Some coaches will tell you that all you need is a good LinkedIn profile. While LinkedIn is useful, if you're aiming to attract premium clients and grow a sustainable business, a website is essential.

Think about your own buying habits. Would you trust a company that had no website? Probably not. Most people turn to Google when researching a business—they're looking for reassurance, legitimacy and clarity on services and pricing.

Your website is your digital shop window. It gives clients confidence, helps answer their questions and builds trust before you even speak. A well-presented, up-to-date website says, “I take my business seriously—and you should, too.”

3. Watch your language

The way you talk about yourself and your business shapes how others see you. It's easy to fall into language patterns that downplay your value. Phrases like "I'm just a VA" or "Can I just ask..." may seem harmless, but they can undermine your authority.

Be mindful of using overly cute or casual branding, too. While names like "admin fairy" or "superstar VA" may be well-meaning, they can detract from the professionalism you're trying to project, especially with corporate clients.

Also, avoid leading with personal details or asking for permission to run your own business. Speak with confidence, clarity and intention. Use words that reflect your expertise and your value.

Credibility isn't about pretending to be something you're not; it's about presenting what you do with pride, professionalism and purpose. When you treat your VA business like a business, others will, too. And that's when great clients, better rates and long-term success follow.

Nurturing ethical excellence: Why admin pros set the standard

By [Nekeisha F. Nelson](#)

In any office, administrative professionals are often the quiet force holding everything together—managing sensitive information, keeping executives on track and making decisions in real time. In doing so, they also play a key role in one of the most important areas of any organization: ethics.

Whether you're handling finances, maintaining calendars or safeguarding confidential information, your ethical conduct directly impacts your company's integrity and reputation. Here's how to make ethical excellence part of your daily routine—and why it matters more than ever.

Ethics 101: Why it starts with you

Administrative professionals are often the gatekeepers of trust. Colleagues and leadership depend on you to manage information responsibly and make sound decisions. That starts with living out core principles: honesty, confidentiality, fairness and respect.

This isn't just about doing the right thing—it's also about modeling ethical behavior for others. When you hold the line on integrity, others tend to follow suit.

Real-life ethical dilemmas and how to handle them

Ethical questions don't always come with warning labels. Let's look at three common scenarios:

1. Confidentiality in action. You accidentally receive an email containing sensitive client information. Instead of reading it, you immediately alert the sender and delete the message. This shows respect for privacy and demonstrates professionalism, essential for protecting your company's reputation.

2. Conflicts of interest. A colleague asks for your help with a personal project during office hours. It might seem harmless, but it's important to draw the line. Politely decline and explain that your priority is work-related tasks. Offer to help after hours if appropriate. Staying objective keeps your work focused and your role respected.

3. Tech and data integrity. You handle digital documents daily. Are you securing them properly? Ethical use of technology means locking your screen, following data-privacy rules and reporting any security concerns. One small

oversight could lead to big problems.

Simple habits that build ethical muscle

Want to lead with integrity? These small, smart habits help build a strong ethical foundation:

- **Know your policies.** Review your organization's code of conduct and any compliance guidelines.
- **Ask questions.** Not sure if something crosses a line? Ask your manager or HR before making a decision.
- **Stay current.** Ethics evolve. Keep learning through training or professional-development courses.

Set the tone for your team

As an admin pro, you help shape your team's work culture. Use your influence:

- **Promote open communication.** Make it easy for colleagues to raise concerns without fear.
- **Encourage ethical behavior.** Gently remind team members when you notice questionable practices.
- **Lead by example.** Show what it means to act with honesty, consistency and respect.

Use an ethical decision-making framework

When faced with a gray-area situation, use a simple framework:

- Who will be affected by your decision?
- What does your job or code of conduct require?
- What values—like honesty or accountability—apply here?

This triangle of considerations helps you take a balanced, thoughtful approach to difficult situations.

The role of ongoing development

Ethical awareness grows with continued learning. Whether it's attending a cybersecurity workshop or taking a course in financial compliance, every new skill helps you make more informed decisions.

For example, a workshop on data privacy might introduce you to better file-encryption practices. Implementing what you learn not only protects your organization, it shows that you take your responsibilities seriously.

Final thoughts

Ethical excellence isn't about perfection. It's about doing your best, staying aware and showing that you care about the people and the organization you support.

By staying informed, asking the right questions and modeling integrity in your daily work, you help build a workplace culture rooted in trust. And in today's fast-paced professional world, that's more than admirable—it's essential.

AI and the art of influence: Why executive assistants aren't going anywhere

By [Lucy Brazier, OBE](#)

“Who even has a one-on-one Executive Assistant these days?” That quote, pulled from a 2023 *Wall Street Journal* article, echoes a common belief: that executive support roles are becoming redundant thanks to AI and automation. But that narrative doesn't hold up.

In truth, the administrative profession is not only alive but rapidly evolving. Executive assistants are no longer limited to calendar management and travel bookings. They're stepping into roles that demand strategic thinking, tech fluency and leadership. Those who embrace change, lead themselves proactively and harness new tools like AI are not being replaced—they're becoming indispensable.

AI isn't a threat—it's a tool

Let's address the elephant in the room: AI is changing how we work. But it's not here to take your job. It's here to enhance it. Administrative professionals are among the fastest adopters of AI tools, according to Microsoft and LinkedIn. From summarizing meetings to prioritizing emails and managing documents, AI saves time so assistants can focus on high-impact tasks.

Think of AI not as autopilot, but as a co-pilot. You're still in control, it just helps you do more, faster. In fact, 77% of companies are either using or exploring AI tools, and executive assistants are often leading adoption on the ground.

Time management = strategic impact

One of the most powerful contributions EAs make is managing executive time. You're not just scheduling; you're protecting your leader's most precious resource. Every five-minute gain you create translates into measurable business value. This is not administrative busywork, it's strategic impact.

The role is shifting

LinkedIn reports that assistants are doing 30% more strategic work now than they were just three years ago. Whether it's leading projects, analyzing data or advising on decisions, today's EAs are taking on work that directly contributes to organizational goals.

But here's the truth: Influence isn't handed to you. It's earned. And earning it starts with self-leadership.

What self-leadership looks like

Self-leadership means taking ownership of your development and direction. It looks like:

- Aligning your work with your executive's priorities
- Anticipating needs instead of reacting
- Streamlining processes and recommending tools
- Investing in skills like AI, communication and strategy

- Speaking up with clarity and confidence.

Know where you are and where you're going

The Global Skills Matrix, developed by the World Administrators Alliance, lays out four levels of assistant work: from reactive task execution (Level 1) to strategic business partnership (Level 4). Wherever you are, you can advance—but you need to know where you stand.

Assess your current skills. Set goals. Make a plan. That's self-leadership in action.

AI as your advantage

Yes, AI can be intimidating. But it's also an opportunity. The 2025 ASAP State of the Profession Report shows that assistants are prioritizing AI skills, particularly in workflow automation and research. Why? Because these skills future-proof your role and boost your visibility.

McKinsey research shows that workers spend nearly 20% of their time looking for information. AI can cut that in half. That time savings opens the door to better decision-making, creativity and collaboration.

Influence comes from impact

You don't need a new title to have influence. You need:

- Confidence in your value
- Clarity in your message
- Credibility through consistency
- Connection across your organization.

Assistants have always had influence. But now the spotlight is finally catching up. With the right mindset and tools—especially AI—you can step fully into that role.

This is your moment

Ask yourself:

- What does the next version of me look like?
- Where can I grow my influence today?
- What skill will take me further this year?

You don't need permission. You just need purpose.

Because influence isn't given. It's claimed.

Become a better project manager with templates and project plans

By [Julie Perrine](#)

If you're handling recurring tasks—and let's face it, most assistants are—you don't need to start from scratch every time. Whether it's planning travel, prepping weekly meetings or sending monthly reports, every repeatable task is an opportunity to work smarter. That's where templates and project plans come in.

Creating templates isn't just about saving time (though you will!). It's about staying on track, being consistent and building a safety net in case something unexpected derails your day. Even better, having documented systems makes it easier to train others, collaborate and ask for help.

What can be turned into a template?

Just about anything:

- Weekly or monthly reports
- Travel planning
- Event prep
- Meeting coordination
- Newsletters or blog posts
- Social media scheduling
- HR, accounting or sales processes
- Career planning or goal tracking.

If you do it more than once, it's a candidate for a reusable plan.

5 steps to build an effective template or project plan

1. Document the steps as you work. Don't try to build a template from memory. Next time you complete the task, write down each step. Be specific. For meetings, include who prepares the agenda, distributes materials and handles logistics. For travel, note everything from booking to pre-departure prep.

2. Batch-related tasks. Look for natural groupings. Tasks that require similar tools or thinking can often be done together, saving time and reducing mental fatigue. This also helps you work around interruptions.

3. Use start dates, not just due dates. Most task tools default to showing the due date. But the *start date* is even more important. Knowing when to begin is key to avoiding last-minute scrambles.

4. Assign clear owners. Yes, you may handle most of it. But if others contribute, such as approvers or content reviewers, make sure they're assigned in your project tool. Accountability keeps things moving.

5. Choose a tracking tool. Use what works for you: Excel, OneNote, Outlook Tasks, Trello, Teamwork, Asana. A digital tool lets you visualize deadlines, update progress and trigger recurring tasks automatically.

A real-world template example

When writing articles for blogs or publications, I use a 30-day timeline in Teamwork. It's a reusable task list that includes:

- Topic discussion (days 1–4)
- First draft writing (days 5–12)
- Editing and revisions (days 13–21)
- Final submission (days 22–28).

We apply the template, plug in the start date and everything populates with current deadlines. No more missed steps.

We do the same for speaking events, which are more complex. One template includes sublists for event logistics, marketing, handouts, travel and follow-up. Each sublist has three to eight tasks with dates and owners. Not every event needs every task, so we delete what's not relevant, but the framework is there.

Tips to sharpen your project skills

Become a power user. Master the software you already have—Excel, Outlook, OneNote, Google apps. Take a course, watch tutorials and look for shortcuts.

Understand project-management basics. You don't need a certification to think like a project manager. Learn key terms and methods. It helps you plan more effectively and collaborate more confidently.

Start your day with your tracking tool. Use it as your command center. I even set my browser to open Teamwork first, so I'm focused from the start.

Why this matters

Templates and project plans reduce stress, improve quality and help you stay ahead of the curve. With just a few systems in place, you can simplify complex work and never forget a step again.

Make today the day you document one recurring task. Turn it into a template. Then sit back and enjoy the time you just saved.

Choosing your networking mentor

By [Chi Chi Okezie](#)

The definition of mentoring is providing advice, helping a less experienced individual. Having a trusted advisor who guides you along the personal and professional paths within your profession can enhance every aspect of an assistant's well-being. But have you ever considered having a networking mentor?

A networking mentor is an individual who directs you along your networking journey and offers tips, strategies and techniques for building your network. Below are some of the benefits to seeking out a networking mentor.

A trusted advisor

A networking mentor can do more than just be a sounding board. They can offer stories and real-life experiences to shape your perspective about networking. Your mentor can provide insights into managing your network, building relationships and reaching your networking goals.

Here are a few questions to help you find a suitable networking mentor:

- Does this person enjoy and find value in networking?
- Does this person have the time and energy to network?
- Does this person have a strong and viable network?
- Does this person share similar values and interests?
- Does this person have time to be a mentor?

Creating a vetting process or list of criteria can also be helpful, as well as setting expectations for the relationship. Along with expectations, there should be a clear outline and boundaries for respect and professionalism. Taking the time to intentionally select a networking mentor increases your chances of a successful relationship.

A trusted ally

Your networking mentor can be an ally. They can encourage you to be persistent in your networking, reach out to contacts and excel in your networking endeavors, offering support and assistance to build your morale and capacity for networking. They can serve as your cheerleader and champion your causes for networking.

Here are a few questions to gauge your networking mentor in their role as your ally:

- Do they show concern or interest in my networking objectives?
- Do they encourage me to be proactive in building my networks?
- Do they support my professional/career growth?
- Do they offer advice for building relationships?
- Do they understand some of the networking challenges that I experience?

A trusted aid

Your networking mentor can support you through challenges, risks and adversity. Their experiences can offer inspiration and keep you motivated and focused along your networking path. They can also show empathy and patience in difficult situations and occurrences. Leaning on your networking mentor for mental and emotional support helps you balance your expectations, capabilities, energy, etc.

Here are a few questions to consider:

- Are they empathetic and understanding?
- Are they patient and discerning?
- Are they supportive and helpful?

- Are they demonstrating servant leadership?
- Are they expressing interest in my objectives and endeavors?

Networking mentors can serve as a support system, offering their guidance and counseling. Finding ways to build trust and show credibility can further enhance the relationship. It is important to foster a safe space and free expression.

Do not overlook the value of having a networking mentor. Set criteria or qualities that you value for relationship building for the short and long term. Do not just consider hard or technical skills; focus on soft skills for communication and reliability. This may take time, but embrace the process. Forging a strong relationship or alliance with your networking mentor will build your professional career and business acumen.

The foundation of events: Why purpose matters

By [Reto Leder](#)

At the heart of every impactful event lies one crucial element: a clear, compelling purpose—its *raison d'être*. More than a gathering of people, an event is a platform for connection, communication and transformation. Without a clearly defined purpose, even the most beautifully planned event risks falling flat.

What is a *raison d'être*?

The *raison d'être*—French for “reason for being”—is the core purpose that drives your event. It’s the guiding principle that informs every decision, from who you invite to how you measure success. Whether your event is about education, celebration, motivation or innovation, knowing why you’re hosting it is the foundation on which everything else is built.

Events as agents of impact

Events have the power to do more than fill rooms or sell tickets. They serve as catalysts for change, learning and collaboration. Conferences spark innovation by bringing minds together. Celebrations strengthen culture and community. Fundraisers drive action for causes that matter. With purpose, events become tools of progress, not just items on a calendar.

Defining your event’s purpose

Start with these five key questions to uncover and define the *raison d'être* of your event:

1. What is the core goal? Ask yourself: What’s the main objective? Are you aiming to inform, connect, entertain, inspire or promote a cause? Pinpointing your event’s core reason gives it direction. *Examples:*

Product launch: Generate buzz and excitement for a new product to drive sales and customer engagement.

Team retreat: Strengthen internal relationships and build alignment across teams.

2. Who is the target audience? Define the primary audience. Who will benefit from attending? Who are you trying to reach, influence or serve? *Examples:*

Product launch: Customers, resellers, marketing and sales teams.

Team retreat: Department teams, cross-functional leaders or new hires.

3. What's the added value? What will participants walk away with? Think of benefits such as new knowledge, connections, solutions or inspiration. *Examples:*

Product launch: Product education, networking, live demos.

Team retreat: Stronger bonds, clear understanding of the company mission, shared experiences.

4. What makes it unique? Identify your event's differentiators. What makes it stand out from others like it? *Examples:*

Product launch: Live Q&A with the innovation team, early access to features.

Team retreat: Interactive challenges, real-time collaboration.

5. What results are you aiming for? Define what success looks like. What outcomes or changes do you expect as a result? *Examples:*

Product launch: Turn attendees into brand advocates.

Team retreat: Improve communication and collaboration across the team.

Bringing it all together

Once you've answered these five questions, distill them into a concise statement of purpose, one or two sentences that define the event's *raison d'être* clearly and powerfully. *Examples:*

Product launch: "To impress and energize our audience with the benefits of our new product, so much so that they leave excited to spread the word."

Team retreat: "To foster true team collaboration that transforms how we work together, not just during the retreat, but every day after."

Final thought

A clearly defined *raison d'être* is more than a planning tool—it's a compass. It keeps the event team aligned, helps participants understand the event's value and ensures that every detail contributes to a shared goal. Start every event by defining its purpose, and you'll lay the foundation for success.

Creating a life that fits you

By [Hiyam Abuguilah](#)

In a world filled with advice on how to succeed, thrive and live better, it's tempting to follow in the footsteps of those who have "made it." Countless self-help books, motivational speeches and social media posts provide formulas for success, whether in business, relationships or health. But the truth is, life is not a one-size-fits-all journey. What worked for one person may not necessarily work for you. Understanding this uniqueness is pivotal for personal growth and real life.

The uniqueness of individual circumstances

Each person is shaped by a unique set of circumstances, including their upbringing, environment, health and opportunities. Studies in psychology emphasize that individual differences significantly impact how people respond to life events and advice. For instance, advice on achieving financial independence may be practical for someone with stable employment but unrealistic for someone facing unemployment or financial hardship.

Similarly, fitness advice often assumes that everyone has the same physical capabilities. A person recovering from a knee injury cannot be expected to perform the same workouts as a professional athlete. This illustrates the importance of adapting advice to one's specific situation.

The danger of overgeneralized advice

Many success stories are based on survivorship bias, the tendency to focus on successful individuals while ignoring those who followed the same path but failed. For example, reading about a tech entrepreneur who dropped out of college and built a billion-dollar company might inspire others to do the same. However, countless other dropouts never achieve such success, but their stories often go untold.

Blindly following someone else's experience can lead to frustration and disappointment when results don't match expectations. This can also damage self-esteem, as people may blame themselves for not achieving similar outcomes.

Learning vs. imitating

There is value in learning from others, but it's essential to differentiate between learning and imitation. According to Albert Bandura's social learning theory, people learn by observing others. However, this learning process involves adapting observed behaviors to fit one's circumstances, not merely copying them.

Successful individuals often share principles that guided their journeys, such as perseverance, adaptability and resilience. These principles are more valuable than specific steps because they can be tailored to different situations.

Practical tips for applying advice wisely

- 1. Evaluate your situation.** Before following any advice, assess whether it aligns with your current circumstances and goals.
- 2. Adapt, don't adopt.** Modify advice to fit your unique needs. If a fitness routine is too intense, find a gentler alternative that works for you.
- 3. Seek various perspectives.** Don't rely solely on one person's experience. Explore multiple viewpoints to gain a well-rounded understanding.
- 4. Trust your sixth sense.** You know your situation better than anyone else. Trust your instincts when deciding what advice to follow.
- 5. Focus on principles, not methods.** Look for principles that can be applied universally rather than strict step-by-step instructions.

Conclusion

While it's tempting to follow the paths of those who have succeeded, it's important to remember that your journey is your own. Life is filled with variables that make each person's experience unique. By learning from others without trying to live by their experiences, you can create a path that is authentic, fulfilling and uniquely yours.

The strategic assistant: More than just a buzzword

By [Jodie Mears](#)

The phrase “strategic assistant” has been trending for the past year, and many administrative professionals are eager to claim the title. It’s showing up on LinkedIn profiles and job descriptions across industries. But let’s be honest: This idea isn’t new. The best assistants have always been strategic, long before the label became popular.

Still, I hear the same questions again and again: “What does a strategic assistant actually do? Am I one?” The answer isn’t just about a role or job title. Being strategic is a mindset. It’s personal. It’s reflective. And most importantly, it’s intentional.

Rethinking what it means to be “strategic”

Many people assume a strategic assistant is someone operating at the highest level: flawlessly managing operations, staying ten steps ahead and functioning as the eyes and ears of the executive. And while those things might be true, that’s not the full picture.

Being strategic isn’t about perfection. It’s not about cramming more tasks into your day or striving to become an executive yourself. It’s about how you think, how you act and how you align your work with the broader goals of the business.

Strategic assistants are natural leaders. They understand the business inside-out, communicate with purpose and bring solutions that drive change. They’re not just reacting, they’re thinking critically, asking “why” as often as “how,” and making sure their work supports both the executive’s vision and their own professional growth.

It’s not about titles—it’s about value

Adding “strategic” to your title doesn’t make it so. What matters is the substance behind the name. Are you growing? Are you challenging the status quo? Are you working in a way that reflects your expertise and adds real value?

Sometimes that growth leads to a formal promotion. Other times, it won’t because of organizational structure, job banding or other limitations. But you don’t need a new title to work strategically. Don’t wait for permission to elevate your role. Start doing it.

My journey: From invisible to intentional

For a long time, I thought great work spoke for itself. I thought being visible meant bragging. I was wrong on both counts.

Visibility is about helping others see the value you bring—not for ego, but for impact. I stopped waiting to be noticed and started showing up. I optimized my LinkedIn profile to reflect my skills and experience, knowing that it’s often the first place people look when they search your name. I began sharing my ideas, lessons and solutions. And something incredible happened: People listened. They related. They benefited.

This didn’t just raise my profile—it built my confidence. It helped me develop a personal brand, both internally and externally, and positioned me as someone others could turn to for insight and collaboration.

Start thinking strategically today

You don't need to overhaul everything at once. Start small. Look at a problem through a strategic lens. Consider how your work connects to the company's bigger goals. Speak up with solutions. Share your story. Be visible.

Because being strategic isn't just a label. It's a mindset. And it's yours for the taking.

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